

Message Text

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15

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 OMB-01 AID-20 DRC-01 /112 W

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P R 230945Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5546

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 5560

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, KS

SUBJECT: KIM YONG SAM NEW NDP LEADER

REF: SEOUL 5523

BEGIN SUMMARY: ACTING PARTY PRESIDENT KIM UI TAEK
WITHDREW FROM NDP CONVENTION LEAVING FIELD TO LEADER
IN BALLOTING, KIM YONG SAM. KIM YONG-SAM WAS VOTED
PARTY PRESIDENT BY ACCLAMATION AUG 23.

1. REFTEL REPORTED THAT BY EVENING AUG 22 FIELD OF
CANDIDATES HAD BEEN REDUCED TO KIM YONG-SAM AND KIM UI
TAEK. SUPPORTERS OF KIM UI-TAEK, INCLUDING MEMBERS OF
SECRETARY GENERAL SIN TO-SWAN'S FACTION, THEN MOVED, OVER
PROTEST OF KIM YONG-SAM, TO POSTPONE UNTIL NEXT DAY RUN-OFF
BALLOT BETWEEN TOP TWO CONTENDERS. CONVENTION
DEGENERATED INTO TURMOIL WITH CHAIRS AND TABLES
OVERTURNED ON STAGE. KIM YONG-SAM FINALLY ADDRESSED
CONVENTION TO AGREE TO POSTPONE FINAL BALLOT UNTIL
NEXT DAY. AT THAT POINT IN EVENING'S PROCEEDINGS,
KIM UI-TAEK UNEXPECTEDLY ANNOUNCED THAT HE WAS
WITHDRAWING FROM CONVENTION, CITING HIS ADVANCED AGE
AND LACK OF ABILITY TO LEAD PARTY AT THIS CRITICAL
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TIME AS REASON FOR HIS DECISION. KIM THEN DECLEARRED THAT

THE FINAL VOTE WOULD TAKE PLACE THE NEXT DAY AND
CHAIRMAN ADJOURNED CONVENTION.

3. WHEN CONVENTION REOPENED IN A.M. AUG 23 KIM UI-TAEK
TOLD DELEGATES THAT KIM YONG-SAM SHOULD BE ELECTED UNANI-
MOUSLY AND THAT THERE WOULD BE NO RUN-OFF BETWEEN KIM AND THIRD
PLACE CONTENDER CHONG HAE-YONG AS SOME DELEGATES DESIRED.
THUS, WITH NO VOICED OPPOSITION KIM WAS DECLARED NDP
PRESIDENT BY UNANIMOUS VOTE. KIM CALLED OTHER FOUR CONTENDERS
TO STAGE TO SALUTE CONVENTION TOGETHER AND MADE SPEECH IN
WHICH HE PLEDGED PARTY TO WORK FOR PEACEFUL FRANSFER OF POWER
AND RESTORATION OF DEMOCRACY. HE CALLED HIS WIN A VICTORY FOR
THE INDIVIDUAL, THE PARTY, DEMOCRACY AND CIVIL RIGHTS.

4. DURING PRESENTATION REPORT ON CONVENTION KIM ADDED
PLEDGE MADE TO SUPPORTERS OF KIM TAE-CHUNG PREVIOUS
DAY (REFTEL) TO FIGHT FOR KIM'S FREEDOM TO LEAVE
KOREA, REPEAL OF EMERGENCY MEASURES, AND RELEASE
OF FORMER NDP ASSEMBLYMEN IN PRISON.

5. WHILE THE MOST POPULAR OF THE NDP CONTENDERS,
KIM'S VICTORY WAS UNEXPECTED; ANY OF OTHER CANDIDATES
WOULD HAVE BEEN PREFERABLE TO GOVERNMENT. VOTE FOR
KIM CAN BE CONSIDERED AS ACCURATE REFLECTION FEELING
LOCAL NDP MEMBERS WHO APPARENTLY WANTED LEADER WITH
CLEAR-CUT OPPOSITION STANCE. ALL OF OTHER CANDIDATES WOULD
HAVE BEEN EXPECTED TO FOLLOW A COURSE OF COOPERATION WITH
GOVERNMENT AS DID THE LATE YU CHIN-SAN.

6. KIM YONG-SAM HAS BEEN A SKILLED AND VOCAL CRITIC
OF GOVERNMENT WHO HAS IN PAST SHOWN FINE SENSE OF
THE LIMITS TO WHICH HE CAN OPERATE WITHIN THE PRESENT
KOREAN POLITICAL CONTEXT. HE HAS ALWAYS HAD HIGH
POLITICAL AMBITIONS. LIKE KIM TAE CHUNG, HE
SEES HIMSELF AS A FIGURE ABLE TO CHALLENGE FOR THE
PRESIDENCY (IF THE OPPORTUNITY PRESENTS ITSELF).

7. WITHIN THE PARTY, KIM LIKE HIS PREDECESSORS IN
LEADERSHIP WILL HAVE A DIFFICULT TIME MANAGING THE
VARIOUS FACTIONAL ELEMENTS. PUBLICLY, WE EXPECT THAT
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HE WILL CONTINUE TO TRY TO PROJECT AN IMAGE OF CLEAR
OPPOSITION TO THE PARK GOVERNMENT'S DOMESTIC POLICIES.
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